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00043988v1
1. (Amended) A lithographic projection apparatus, comprising:  
a radiation system [for supplying] constructed and arranged to supply a projection beam of radiation;  
a mask table provided with a mask holder for holding a mask;  
a substrate table provided with a substrate holder for holding a substrate;  
a projection system constructed and arranged to image [for imaging] an irradiated portion of the mask onto a target portion of the substrate;[and]  
a preparatory station comprising an intermediate table on which a substrate can be positioned before transfer to the substrate table[;],  
[characterized in that] the intermediate table [comprises] comprising a major surface provided with a plurality of apertures[,]; and  
a gas bearing generator constructed and arranged to generate [means for generating] a gas bearing between said major surface and a substrate located thereon.
  2. (Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, [characterized in that] wherein said preparatory station comprises [gas ionizing means for ionizing] a gas ionizer constructed and arranged to ionize said gas.
  3. (Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1 [or 2, characterized in that] wherein said intermediate table comprises a first [control means for regulating] temperature controller constructed and arranged to regulate a [the] temperature of [that] the intermediate

table.

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4. (Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, [2 or 3, characterized in that]  
wherein said gas bearing has thickness less than 150 µm.

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5. (Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1[-4, characterized in that]  
wherein said preparatory station comprises a second [control means for regulating]  
temperature controller constructed and arranged to regulate a [the] temperature of said gas.

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ON THE SUBSTRATE TABLE*

6. (Amended) An apparatus according to claim 3 [or 5, characterized in that said first and/or said second control means maintain] wherein said first temperature controller maintains the intermediate table and the gas at a temperature substantially equal to [the] a temperature of the substrate table.

7. (Amended) An apparatus according to claim 1[-6, characterized in that]  
wherein said apparatus further comprises:  
a position detector constructed and arranged to detect [detecting means for detecting]  
a first position of said substrate on said intermediate table;  
a displacement calculator [calculating means] for calculating a required displacement between said first position and a desired position of the substrate on the intermediate table;  
and  
an actuator constructed and arranged to move [moving means for moving] said

substrate from said first position to said desired position.

8. (Amended) An apparatus according to claim 7, [characterized in that] wherein said [detecting means are] position detector is constructed and arranged to detect an edge of the substrate.

9. (Amended) An apparatus according to claim 7 [or 8, characterized in that] wherein said [detecting means are] position detector is constructed and arranged to detect a mark on the substrate.

10. (Amended) A device manufacturing method comprising [the steps of]:  
(a) providing a mask table with a mask which contains a pattern,  
(b) providing a substrate table with a substrate which is at least partially covered by a layer of radiation-sensitive material, [and]  
(c) subsequent to (b), providing the substrate to an intermediate table comprising a major surface provided with a plurality of apertures, and maintaining the substrate for a given time interval upon a gas bearing generated between the major surface and the substrate; and  
[c] (d) using a projection beam of radiation to project an irradiated part of the mask onto a target area of the layer of radiation-sensitive material. [; characterized in that prior to step (b) the following steps are carried out:

providing the substrate to an intermediate table comprising a major surface provided with a plurality of apertures, and maintaining the substrate for a given time interval upon a

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cont.

gas bearing generated between the said major surface and the substrate.]

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12. (Amended) A substrate preparing device comprising an intermediate table on which a substrate can be positioned before transfer to a substrate table in a lithographic projection apparatus;

[characterized in that] the intermediate table [comprises] comprising a major surface provided with a plurality of apertures, and a gas bearing [means for generating] generator constructed and arranged to generate a gas bearing between said major surface and a substrate located thereon.

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Please add the following new claims:

--13. A substrate preparing device according to claim 12, wherein said gas bearing generator comprises:

a gas source arranged to deliver gas through the apertures to generate the gas bearing,  
and

an evacuation pump arranged to evacuate the gas from the gas bearing.

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14. An apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said gas bearing generator comprises:

a gas source arranged to deliver gas through the apertures to generate the gas bearing,  
and

an evacuation pump arranged to evacuate the gas from the gas bearing.--